

The American Observer

A free, virtuous, and enlightened people must know well the great principles and causes on which their happiness depends.—James Monroe

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Test Yourself

By Walter E. Myer

I HAVE made a list, not all-inclusive but fairly extensive, of questions pertaining to the qualities and achievements which make for happy, successful, and agreeable living. Since there are 20 questions, you may grade yourself by marking 5 points for every "yes" answer, and then totaling your score at the end.

In giving you this set of questions, I do not mean to encourage you to think about yourself too much. It is easy, I know, for any of us to concentrate upon "self" to the exclusion of others. Nevertheless, occasional self-analysis is necessary if we are to correct old habits that are bad and go on to new accomplishments.

1. Are you pleased when you hear that a friend of yours has succeeded in an undertaking or has enjoyed a bit of good fortune?

2. Do you feel a sense of sympathy for a person who has suffered misfortune?

3. Do you contribute much to the satisfaction and enjoyment of your relatives?

4. Are you honest and truthful at all times?

5. Do you always do what you promise to do—are you dependable?

6. Do you have a large enough vocabulary so that, without resort to slang, you are able to express yourself clearly and precisely?

7. Do you enunciate clearly?

8. Are you ordinarily courteous and friendly?

9. Do you have a clean and neat appearance?

10. Do you make friends easily and keep them?

11. Are you reading and learning as much as you can about various vocations, so that you will be better prepared to decide upon a career?

12. Do you spend money wisely?

13. If you drive a car, do you drive cautiously and safely?

14. Have you studied the rules of diet, so that you eat wisely?

15. Do you spend a great deal of time in reading for enjoyment, information, and inspiration?

16. Do you, in addition to your lighter conversations, engage in more serious and stimulating discussions?

17. Have you a hobby which is really interesting?

18. Are you interested in community, national, and international problems?

19. Do you put in more work than you are required to do on any one subject which you take in school?

20. Do you frequently give time to school or community activities?

If too many of your answers are "no," you had better work for improvement.



Walter E. Myer



PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS and Westminster Bridge in London. Vast areas of the British Commonwealth are no longer ruled from England's ancient capital city.

A Family of Nations

Eight Independent Nations and a Host of Dependent Territories are Linked Together in British Commonwealth

DURING the coming months, we shall hear and read a great deal about the British monarchy. Much attention will be given to the new Queen, Elizabeth II, as she assumes responsibilities that have been passed down, in continually changing form, through a thousand-year line of rulers. Finally, some months from now, her installation as Queen will be completed in a colorful coronation ceremony, laden with rituals and symbolism out of Britain's past, and with expressions of hope for the future.

Many Americans find it difficult to understand why the monarchy receives as much attention as it does, when, as a matter of fact, the Queen has comparatively little power to control the actions of the British government. Britons, though, are not puzzled at all. For them, the Queen serves as a living emblem of their country's traditions and its ideals. Because she does not become involved in political quarrels, she is a person around whom the whole nation can rally.

Equally important is the fact that Queen Elizabeth and her crown constitute a magic tie that holds together the vast British Commonwealth of Nations. Besides being Queen of Great Britain, Elizabeth is also Queen

of Canada, of Ceylon, of Australia, and of other countries. These independent nations would not consent to be governed and controlled from London, but they gladly acknowledge membership in the Commonwealth family by accepting—as their own—the same Queen who reigns over Britain.

The world has never before seen anything quite like the British Commonwealth of Nations. This huge conglomeration of countries and territories, bound together with a network of economic and sentimental ties, almost defies description.

It takes in about a fourth of the world's population and land area. It has approximately 600 million people, and nearly 13 million square miles of territory (16 million if we include Commonwealth claims in the Antarctic).

The Commonwealth extends around the world, touches every continent, and reaches into practically all latitudes. It covers frozen wastelands, tropical jungles, majestic mountains, fertile plains, barren deserts, and tiny islands. People of several races and religions, speaking countless languages and dialects, and representing all stages of civilization, are to

(Continued on page 2)

U. S. Airlines Face Problems

Series of Disastrous Accidents Raises Many Questions Regarding Vital Industry

THE recent series of plane accidents in Elizabeth, New Jersey, has focused attention on the nation's airlines. Americans have been shocked by the three crashes of transport planes arriving at, or leaving, Newark Airport near Elizabeth. The airport has been closed—temporarily, at least—and government and airline officials are studying the situation, trying to determine how future disasters can be prevented.

As a result of these and other crashes which have taken place this winter, many people are asking the following questions: Is it safe to travel by plane? What can be done to lessen the likelihood of crashes? Does aviation have a bright future or not?

Before we turn to these questions, let us take a brief look at civil aviation in the U. S. today (as distinguished from military aviation), and particularly at the air-transport system. When we do so, we will find an industry which has expanded tremendously in recent years.

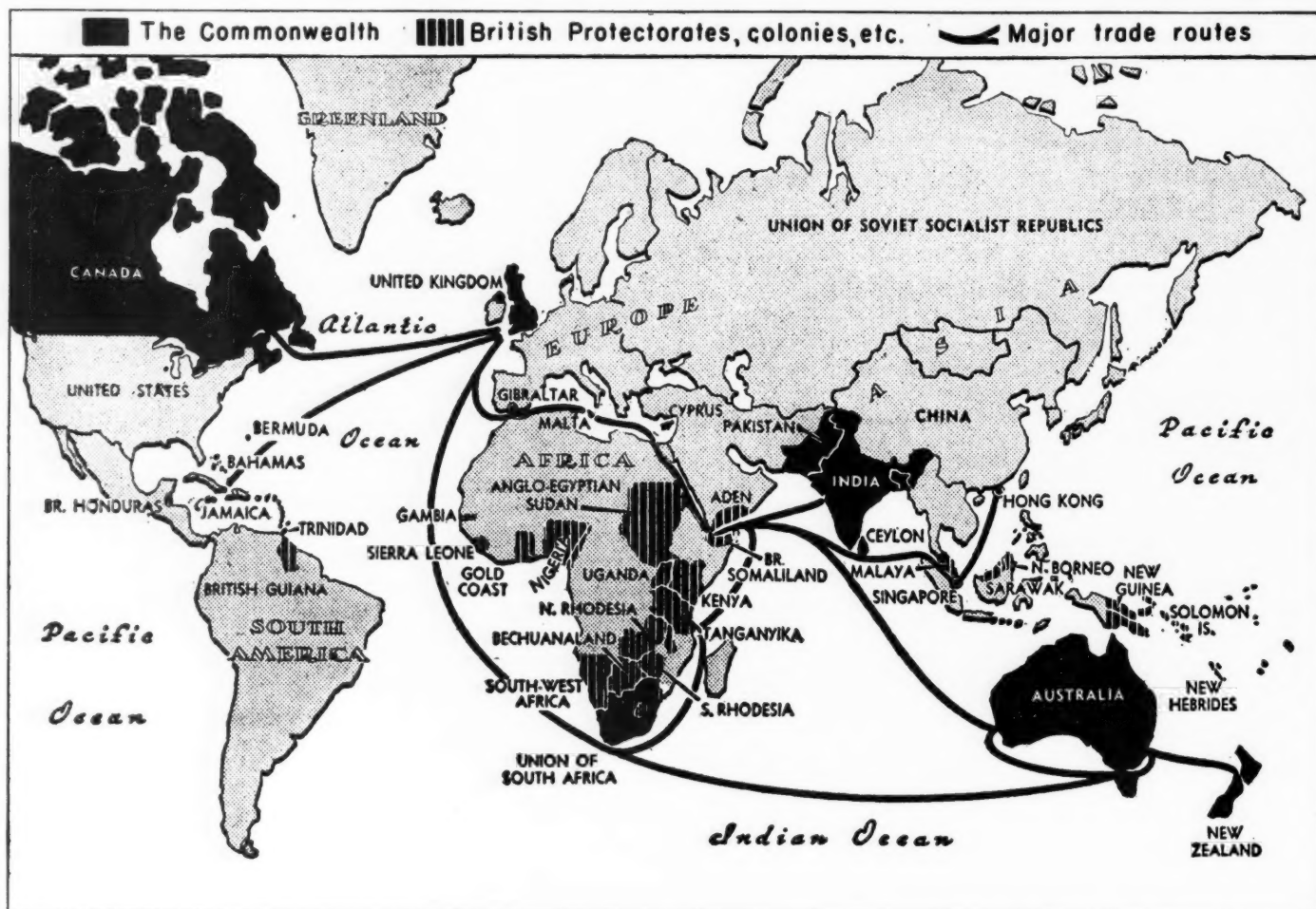
In 1951 the domestic scheduled airlines of the United States carried more than 22 million passengers. Close to 1,240 carrier planes were in use on regularly scheduled airlines. Several hundred more planes were in use on non-scheduled lines, which run special flights from time to time. Almost 6,000 civil airports were in operation.

A comparison of these figures with statistics compiled in 1941 shows the scope of the postwar air expansion. In 1941 the total passengers carried on U. S. lines was about 3 million. About 370 aircraft were in service on regular lines. Less than 2,500 airfields were in use.

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AIRLINES in the United States employ many young women as stewardesses



THE EXTENSIVE British Commonwealth is made up of eight independent nations, together with their colonies and other holdings. It is a big family, and

contains roughly a fourth of all the people and land area in the world. It stretches around the globe, so that "the sun never sets on Commonwealth territory."

The Vast British Commonwealth and Empire

(Concluded from page 1)

be found within Queen Elizabeth's realms.

Specifically, what lands make up the Commonwealth? At the head of the list are eight independent nations: Australia, Britain, Canada, Ceylon, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, and South Africa. They contain over 525 million of the Commonwealth's 600 million people. Ranking next to them is Southern Rhodesia—an African colony which has a large measure of self-government.

The rest of the Commonwealth consists of colonies and territories that are ruled in many different ways. Some are controlled rather directly from London. Others, while operating under a degree of supervision by Great Britain, are well along on the road to complete self-government. Examples of this latter group are the Mediterranean island of Malta, the Atlantic islands of Bermuda, and several British colonies in the Caribbean region.

The Protectorates

Scattered over the world, meanwhile, are a number of British protectorates—such as Malaya in Southeast Asia and several others in Africa. These are regarded, in a sense, as independent states, but they are subject to a great deal of English control.

Three territories, known as *condominiums*, are ruled jointly by Britain and other nations. Control of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan is shared with Egypt; the New Hebrides Islands, in the Pacific, are held jointly with

France; and Canton and Enderbury Islands, also in the Pacific, are shared with the United States.

Great Britain is not the only free Commonwealth country that has dependent lands or possessions. Colonies and other territories are held by Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa also.

The structure of the Commonwealth is constantly changing. As colonial peoples develop increased ability to govern themselves, and as they demand greater measures of freedom, they move up the ladder toward complete self-rule. Some of the present-day colonial territories will eventually become independent realms of the Commonwealth, like Canada and the rest.

All present members of the Commonwealth—aside from Britain herself, of course—were once British colonial possessions, but each eventually demanded self-government. Remembering the American Revolution, Britain realized that she could not hold her colonies indefinitely against their will. So the idea of creating a "family of free nations" was gradually developed. It enabled Britain to grant her territories independence and still remain in close association with them.

The Commonwealth was brought fully and formally into existence in 1931, by the Statute of Westminster. Canada and some of the other realms, however, had been self-governing long before that time.

The Commonwealth idea has worked well enough for Britain and her "family" that other nations have sought to follow it. The Dutch Crown serves as a symbol of union between Indonesia and the Netherlands. France, though she has no monarch, has set up a French Union that resembles the British Commonwealth to some extent.

Nations are not required to stay in the Commonwealth unless they want to do so. When the former British colony of Burma became independent in 1948, she refused to take Commonwealth membership. Ireland was once a member of the association, but withdrew in 1949.

India and Pakistan

India and Pakistan became independent Commonwealth nations in 1947. Shortly thereafter, India decided that she no longer wanted to recognize the British monarch officially as her King. Instead, she planned to set up a republic with a President. The question then arose as to whether India could stay in the Commonwealth under these conditions.

Commonwealth officials worked out an arrangement whereby she could. India simply declared that she desired—as a republic—to continue her "full membership in the Commonwealth of Nations" and that she would accept the British monarch as "head of the Commonwealth."

So Elizabeth II is Queen of Britain, of Canada, and of several other na-

tions, but she is *not* Queen of India. To Indians she is simply "head of the Commonwealth."

A great many people in the United States may regard this whole arrangement as a meaningless play upon words, but the Commonwealth peoples do not. They believe that there are a number of advantages in a cooperative association of free nations.

There are other important ties, besides the Queen and the Crown, that help to unite the Commonwealth of Nations. One of these is trade. Each of the Commonwealth countries carries on a very large part of its foreign commerce with other members of the association. These nations have established a special "preference system" in their trade laws, so that they charge lower tariffs on one another's goods than on the products of outside countries.

All the Commonwealth nations except Canada belong to what is known as the "sterling area," that is, in dealing with one another they use the *pound sterling* as their common money. The sterling area countries also cooperate by pooling their supply of dollars that they must use when buying materials from the United States or Canada.

The Commonwealth lands often work together on foreign policy and defense matters, although they are not compelled to do so. Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa all entered World War II against Germany in the same month that Britain

did—September 1939. But Ireland, which was at that time within the Commonwealth, never took part in the war.

Today, a large part of the Commonwealth is actively on our side in the great world struggle between Moscow and the anti-Soviet countries. Britain and Canada are allied with us in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and last year we signed a Pacific defense pact with Australia and New Zealand.

The most serious "family quarrel" within the Commonwealth at present is the clash between India and Pakistan. These two nations have been at each other's throats ever since they gained freedom in 1947. The chief bone of contention between them now is the mountain state of Kashmir, which both countries want to possess. There has been considerable fear, in recent years, that India and Pakistan might begin fighting a full-scale war. Their joint association in the Commonwealth may be partly responsible for the fact that they have not yet done so.

We frequently hear the assertion that "Britain is losing her empire," or that "the British Empire is crumbling." Are such statements true? In a sense, they are. The term "British Empire" can be applied only to those lands that Britain governs as colonial territories. Therefore, as the number of free Commonwealth countries increases, the size of the "British Empire" shrinks.

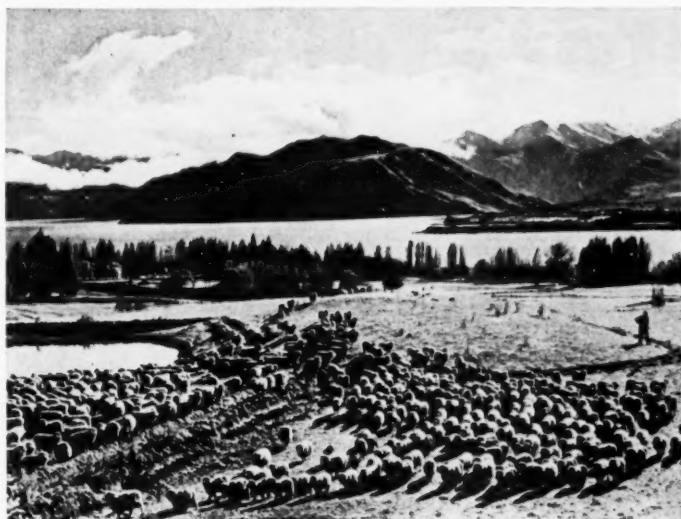
On the other hand, it might be said that the Empire is being changed into something different and better. The *Washington Post*, commenting on the late King George VI, expresses this view in the following words:

"There have been suggestions that his reign was somehow a dismal chapter in British history because it coincided with the 'loss' of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon. . . But what is national greatness, anyway? Which was the greater achievement—to conquer India or to set it free? . . . Which was the finer act of statesmanship—to crown Victoria Empress of India [as was done in the 1800's], or to keep India within the Commonwealth on her own terms as an equal and self-respecting member?"

The *Post* concludes by praising the reign of George VI as a period during which progress was made "in transforming a restless empire into a family of free nations."



ELIZABETH is Britain's first ruling Queen since Victoria, whose reign lasted from 1837 to 1901



WOOL is one of the principal products of New Zealand. Shown here is a flock of sheep in the vicinity of Lake Wanaka and the Buchanan Mountain Range.

Enviably New Zealand

Island Nation in South Pacific Has Overcome Many Problems That Plague Countries in Other Parts of World

SURROUNDED by the vast stretches of the south Pacific and with its nearest neighbor, Australia, more than 1,200 miles away, New Zealand has reached an enviable position. Unemployment is at a minimum. Poverty is almost unknown. Interest in government is high—about 90 per cent of the voters usually take part in elections. Schools are good. Most of the people can read and write. The population is healthy and the death rate is one of the lowest in the world.

In addition, New Zealand has a year-round climate that is mild, a soil that is extremely fertile, and scenery that includes snow-capped mountains, rolling plains, volcanoes, geysers, and fiords along the seacoast.

The islands (two that are large and a number of smaller ones) were discovered in 1642 by a Dutch navigator. Other explorers visited the islands during the next two centuries, but fierce natives, the Maoris, made colonization slow. Finally, in 1840, Britain annexed the islands and settlement was encouraged.

From that time on, New Zealand has been an outpost of the western world in the south Pacific. The British who went to the islands, in fact, set out "to transplant English society, with its laws, customs, associations, habits, manners, and feeling—everything of England, in short, but its soil," to their new homeland.

Since 1852, New Zealand has been self-governing, though it has always maintained close ties with Britain. It became a Dominion in 1907 and today it is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations (see article which begins on page 1).

Agriculture Leads

New Zealand's mild climate and fertile soil make farming the country's principal activity. Some fruits, grains, and vegetables are grown, but grazing ranks first in importance. According to recent figures, New Zealand has about 33 million sheep and more than 5 million head of cattle. Wool, butter, and meat are the country's leading exports. Factories are gaining a foothold, but the New Zealanders are still content to import most of the manu-

factured goods they need. Their trade is primarily with Britain, though the United States and Australia have commercial ties with the country, too.

In area, New Zealand is about the size of Colorado. Its population of a little more than 2 million includes about 100,000 of the dark-skinned Maoris. Some of New Zealand's leaders believe the country could absorb another 5 million people, but immigration has been limited in the past. Restrictions were eased slightly last year and a number of Europe's displaced persons were admitted.

In World Affairs

In spite of its out-of-the-way location (in addition to being 1,200 miles east of Australia, the country is 6,500 miles from San Francisco and 4,400 miles from the Hawaiian Islands), New Zealand takes a part in world affairs. Her soldiers fought with the Allies during World War II, and she has had troops in Korea during most of the fighting there. Last September, New Zealand signed a mutual defense treaty with the United States and Australia.

The island nation's interest in other countries goes beyond the military, though. More than a year ago, New Zealand joined with 6 other Pacific powers to establish a 6-year program of economic aid to countries of southeast Asia. Similar to our Point 4 Plan, the 6-year project, known as the Colombo Plan, is directed toward modernizing undeveloped areas.

From 1935 to 1949, New Zealand's Labor Party was in power. During that time a good deal of social legislation, covering such points as old-age insurance and government-sponsored medical care, was enacted. In 1949, a more conservative group, the National Party, won at the polls. This party increased its strength in Parliament in 1950 and in 1951.

Pronunciations

Maori—mou'ri (ou as in out)
New Hebrides—new heb'ri-déz
Sarawak—suh-rah'wahk
Somaliland—sô-mah'ti-lând
Tanganyika—tân-gân-yê'kuh
Uganda—yoo-gân'duh

Readers Say—

Our history class has begun a "pay your poll tax campaign." Members of our class are encouraging each citizen to pay his special tax so that he can vote at election time. We are distributing special circulars among the people of our community. Each message bears the slogan: "Poll tax due, I guess you knew. Time to pay, don't delay."

WANDA JO WILLIAMSON,
Gladewater, Texas.

I believe the idea suggested in Steve Borsuch's letter is a good one. Radio broadcasts by American students to Iron Curtain lands might be an effective means to combat Communist lies about life in the United States.

I am afraid, however, that very few of the people who live in Soviet-controlled nations would be able to hear these broadcasts. I lived behind the Iron Curtain for one year, and I know how difficult it is for the people of these lands to get word from free countries. Very few persons in Communist lands have radios, and they are forbidden to listen to foreign broadcasts.

IRI KARIST,
Danbury, Connecticut.

I think sessions of Congress should be televised to give all citizens a chance to see their lawmakers in action. In this way, the voters could find out how effectively their elected representatives are doing their jobs in the nation's capital.

JAMES GILLESPIE,
Highland Park, Illinois.



I believe it would be poor policy to televise regular congressional meetings. It would make the lawmakers uncomfortable to have all their actions shown on TV screens across the country. Moreover, the legislators probably could not think clearly in the face of glaring lights and the distraction caused by video cameras.

MARILYN CURTIS,
Imperial, Nebraska.

It seems to me that boys, as well as girls, ought to get a chance to study home economics. In fact, it would be a good idea for schools to make arrangements this spring whereby boys study home economics for a time, while girls take up gardening. Let's have the opinions of other students on this subject.

DOYLE NEWLUN,
West Lima, Wisconsin.

(Address your letters to Readers Say—, THE AMERICAN OBSERVER, 1733 K Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.)

The Story of the Week

"I Speak for Democracy"

The four winners of the 1951-52 Voice of Democracy Contest were honor guests in the nation's capital last week. Each had won a trip to Washington, D. C., along with an excursion to Williamsburg, Virginia, and a \$500 college scholarship.

The four, whose 5-minute broadcast scripts on the subject "I Speak for Democracy" placed first in the contest are: Dwight Clark, Jr., Fort Collins High School, Fort Collins, Colorado; George A. Frilot, III, Jesuits High School, New Orleans, Louisiana; Mara Gay Massilink, Burlington High School, Burlington, Iowa; and Thaddeus S. Zolkiewicz, Canisius High School, Buffalo, New York.

The contest is sponsored annually by the National Association of Broadcasters, the U. S. Junior Chamber of Commerce, and the Radio-Television Manufacturers Association.

The winning scripts, condensed because of space limitations, are printed on page 7.

Record of UN Assembly

Now that the United Nations General Assembly's sixth session is over, world leaders are carefully studying the results of the three-month parley. Here, in brief, are some highlights of the Paris meetings which ended earlier this month:

1. The assembly voted to form a 12-nation disarmament commission, and asked the group to draw up a world-wide plan for arms reductions as well as international controls over atomic energy.

2. A special UN group was asked to investigate conditions in West and East Germany to find out whether free elections are possible throughout the democratic and Communist-controlled sections of the former enemy country.

3. Greece was elected to a two-year membership on the UN Security Council—the 11-member body whose job it is to discuss conflicts that threaten world peace.

4. Italy, along with nine other non-Communist nations, unsuccessfully knocked on the UN's door for admittance. Because Russia insisted on

membership for five of her satellites as the price for allowing Italy and other countries backed by the free world into the UN, no action was taken on this matter.

5. The assembly voted to hold a special session to discuss Korea's future as soon as an armistice agreement is reached between UN negotiators and Communist representatives in that war-torn land.

What Next, India?

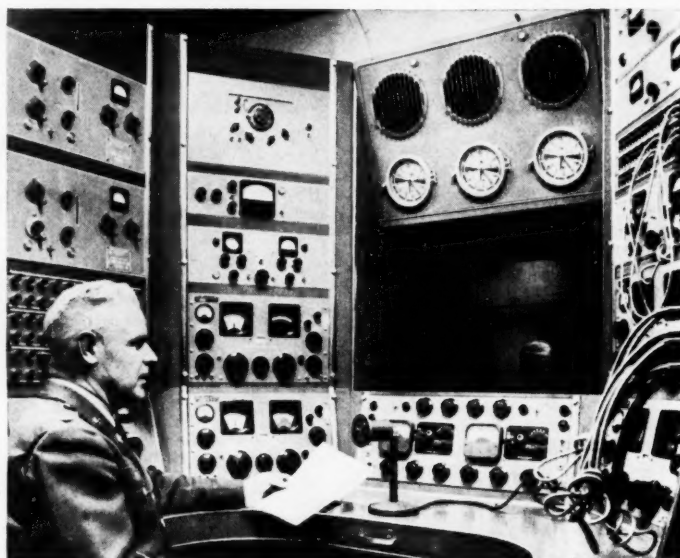
Now that India's first big nationwide election is over and most ballots have been counted, the vast Asiatic land is wondering about the effects of the important contest on the nation's future.

According to recent election counts, Prime Minister Nehru's Congress Party won well over two thirds of all local and national elective offices at stake in the voting. Moreover, Nehru and his helpers are expected to continue as leaders of democratic India after the newly elected legislature takes office next May. Some Indian officials are worried, however, about communism's election gains in some parts of the country.

All told, the Communists won slightly more than five per cent of the total votes tallied thus far. The Reds were particularly strong in a few key Indian states, such as the trading and manufacturing center of Madras. In India's House of People—the country's popularly elected national legislature of almost 500 members—the Communists won some 20 seats.

The elections show, some observers believe that the Communists are a force to be reckoned with in India. A number of Indians seem to be joining Communist Party ranks, these people contend, because they are bitterly dissatisfied with the Congress Party's slow progress in dividing up large land holdings, and in making other improvements in living conditions.

On the other hand, there are people who argue that communism has little, if any, chance of success in India. Despite their strong bid to win over poverty-stricken Indians with glowing false promises, these observers say, the Communists made a poor



THE CONTROL PANEL in a new communications car that is to form part of the President's train whenever he travels by rail. The car, which was delivered early this month, has facilities for broadcasting, for recording, for transmitting pictures by radio photo, and for sending and receiving teletype messages.

showing at the polls in the nation as a whole. As India continues to make progress against disease and poverty, it is said, communism will probably lose the small amount of support it has now.

Our Air Power vs. Russia's

Is Russia winning the struggle for air supremacy? Are Soviet planes superior to our models? The nation's lawmakers, as well as Americans everywhere, are asking these and other questions as Congress studies plans for the country's future air needs.

Hanson Baldwin, military writer for the *New York Times*, compares our air power with Russia's:

"We do not really know how big or how effective Russia's existing air armada is. We do believe that the Soviets have far more new battle-ready jet fighter planes than we have. Moreover, their jets are speedier than the planes we now have in use. Nevertheless, our fighters have thus far done quite well against enemy craft in the Korean war.

"Actually, a nation needs a number of things besides fighter planes to be strong in the air. Strategic bases within striking distance of a target; long-range bombers; a large number of well-trained pilots and technicians; and stockpiles of advanced atomic weapons are needed in an air war of today. We are fairly certain that the United States is well ahead of Russia in most, if not all, of these things."

1951 Accident Toll

The nation lost a city of 93,000 Americans last year! More people than live in Stamford, Connecticut, or Stockton, California, were killed in accidents throughout the country in the past 12-month period. Moreover, some 9 million people suffered injuries in 1951—more persons than live in the nation's largest metropolis, New York City.

These startling facts were released by the National Safety Council a short time ago. The Council reports that the financial bill for all mishaps in 1951 added up to some 8 billion dollars—about \$50 for each man, woman, and child in the nation.

The No. 1 killer in 1951, as in past years, was the auto—37,500 people lost their lives on the country's streets and highways. Accidents in the home were second on the list, accounting for 27,000 deaths. Mishaps of workers on the job, in fires, and in airplane and railway accidents also took a heavy toll.

Price Control Dispute

President Truman has asked Congress to strengthen the nation's anti-inflation program. The existing price-control law, which expires next June, has too many "loopholes" which allow price increases, the Chief Executive declares.

First, the President contends, the lawmakers should tighten regulations to limit installment buying in order to reduce heavy demands on scarce goods. At present, refrigerators, television sets, and many other articles can be bought with a down payment



SCENE OF THE MEETING, in Lisbon, Portugal, of high-ranking representatives from countries in the North

Atlantic Treaty Organization. Difficult problems of western European defense have been under discussion here.

of 15 per cent of the item's cost, and can be paid for over a period of 18 months.

President Truman also wants stronger controls on prices than are now in effect. He particularly wishes to change a provision in the existing control law which allows wholesale and retail merchants to boost prices in order to keep their profits at a certain level.

Meanwhile, a number of congressmen say we need fewer, not more, controls over our economy. These lawmakers argue that too many government regulations will "strangle" business activities, and may actually increase the prices we pay for goods by cutting down on the quantity being produced, thereby creating even more shortages.

It remains to be seen what action Congress will take on Truman's price-control proposals.

School Balloting

Good citizens of the future should learn how to vote while still in high school. That is the belief of the Student Council at Artesia High School, Artesia, New Mexico, which is translating this principle into action.

Aided by their social studies teachers, members of Artesia High's Student Council try to make school elections as realistic as possible. When they vote for school officers, the students cast their ballots at their city's regular voting booths. Even the ballots, which are very similar to those used in general voting, look official. In the latest contest, some 90 per cent of the school's students went to the polls.

What a boon to democracy it would be if this percentage of adults informed themselves and went to the polls!

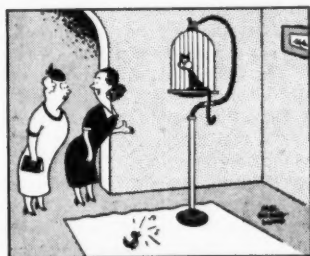
Living Costs

According to figures reported by the U. S. government, it now costs \$1.89 to buy the same amount of goods that \$1.00 would have purchased between 1935 and 1939, or to obtain what \$1.70 would have bought just before the outbreak of war in Korea.

THE LIGHTER SIDE

In one of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, Douglas accused Lincoln of being two-faced. To which Lincoln quickly replied: "I leave it to my audience. If I had two faces, would I be wearing this one?"

"The colonel seems annoyed about something this morning."
"Perhaps it's because he received a letter marked 'private'."



"It saves me a lot of worry!"



THIS NEW German-built Ford has four cylinders, runs at speeds up to 68 miles per hour, and travels about 30 miles on a gallon of gasoline

Americans are earning a great deal more money now than they did in the years prior to World War II, but price increases have raised their living expenses too. Suppose that between 1935 and 1939 a family lived on \$200 a month. By the time the Korean war began, that family would have needed \$340 to live on the same scale—no better and no worse than in 1935-1939. Today the family would need \$378 a month.

Prices of war materials that our government must buy, like everything else, have gone up very sharply in recent years. That is the main reason why our defense program is so very costly. Another reason, however, is that military equipment is becoming more and more complicated, and it would be costlier to produce now than in the past even if prices in general had not risen so much.

Dutch New Guinea

The long-standing dispute between the Netherlands and Indonesia over the control of Dutch New Guinea is flaring up with increasing bitterness these days. Indonesia, a country of many islands which became independent of Dutch rule late in 1949, insists that the disputed land is part of her domain. "The Dutch colony is next door to our islands and its people are related to us," Indonesians argue.

After watching the squabbles that often develop over wills, one can sympathize with the man whose will contained this one sentence:
"Being of sound mind, I spent every cent I had."

When the man took his hunting dog out to show him off to several strangers, to his amazement the dog pointed at one of them.

"He's smarter than you think," said the man; "my name is Partridge."

Boss: "What do you want?"
Employee: "May I use your phone? My wife told me to ask for a raise but she didn't tell me how much."

"Probably the world's greatest humorist is the man who named installments 'easy payments'."

Now that planes have been invented which travel faster than sound, scientists probably will go to work on inventing a sound which travels faster than planes.

Officials of the Netherlands, meanwhile, say that Indonesia has no real claim to the island. In fact, they contend, most of the colony's one million people want to remain under Dutch rule.

(Indonesia claims only the western half of New Guinea which is ruled by the Netherlands. The eastern portion is supervised by Australia.)

Somewhat larger than Montana, Dutch New Guinea is a very backward land. Many of its inhabitants live in primitive thatched huts as their ancestors did centuries ago. The colony produces some oil and gold, but most of its mineral resources and wealth have not yet been developed.

Foreign Glimpses

Italy, a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization defense system, now feels free to rearm for the first time since the end of World War II. With some support from the western nations, Italy recently declared an end to the arms restrictions imposed on the land by its 1947 peace treaty. The peace pact is no longer in effect, Italy says, because Russia has repeatedly vetoed the south European country's bid for United Nations membership, though the Soviets were pledged to bring Italy into the UN under the peace treaty.

Egypt has a special committee at work on the problem of giving the country's landless farmers small plots of land. The group hopes to divide some four million acres of land, which is to be watered by irrigation projects now being planned, among needy Egyptians. Under the proposal, farmers would pay the government for the land over a period of 40 years.

The Japanese are worried about the fate of the men aboard 60 fishing vessels which are being held by the Russians. Some time ago, the Soviets seized a total of 200 Japanese ships in the waters off Japan's big northern island of Hokkaido. Later, the Communists allowed all except 60 of these vessels to return home. Russia has been asked to return the 60 ships.

Correction

Last week in the series on Presidential candidates, THE AMERICAN OBSERVER stated that Governor Earl Warren of California ran for Vice President on the Republican ticket in 1949. The year, of course, was 1948. We regret the error.

SPORTS

DON Gehrman is again proving this winter that he is one of America's best runners. The 24-year-old athlete from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, has been taking part in many indoor track meets throughout the nation. Almost always he is the winner of the one-mile race.

Don usually is content to let someone else take the lead for most of the race. The Wisconsin runner follows on the heels of the leader, meanwhile saving some strength for a last big effort. Then, when the runners go into the home stretch, Gehrman shoots into the lead and sprints for all he is worth. Most of the time he outraces his opponents in the last, desperate drive for the tape.

Don's biggest rival is Fred Wilt, a special agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, whose hobby is running. Last winter Don and the Flying G-man raced nine times, and Gehrman won seven of these contests. Practically every race was decided in the last few yards.

Like most good distance runners, Don is thin and wiry. He weighs only 130 pounds, but has plenty of stamina. He first came into national attention as a star trackman at the University of Wisconsin. There he won many medals in races ranging all the way from the half mile to the long, hilly cross-country event.

Sports fans are wondering if Gehrman will be able to win the 1,500-meter race (just about a mile in length) at next summer's Olympic games in Finland. No American has



DON GEHRMANN of Milwaukee leads Fred Wilt (in white) and Alf Holmberg of Tennessee in a mile run.

won this race in Olympic competition since 1912.

Some think that Gehrman will not be able to keep up with Europe's best runners, despite his powerful last-minute surge. However, Don's admirers predict that he will rise to the occasion, as he has so many times in the past. They believe he will win a gold medal for the United States team in the 1,500-meter running contest.

Don works for the American Automobile Association in his home city. When he journeys to eastern cities to take part in track meets, he almost always goes by plane—his favorite form of transportation. For his hobbies, Don likes to sing and to play the piano.

Problems of U. S. Airlines

(Continued from page 1)

The above figures apply only to domestic airlines—that is, routes which are completely within the United States. However, the growth of air transportation between the U. S. and other lands is equally spectacular. In 1941 the number of passengers carried by U. S. international airlines totaled about 235,000. Many of these were transported to such near-by points as Cuba. Only 83 aircraft were in use in travel abroad.

Big Expansion

Now look at last year's figures. More than 2 million persons were carried on international flights by U. S. regularly scheduled lines. More than 160 planes were in service. Travel across the Atlantic by plane has become commonplace with regularly scheduled airliners traveling from New York to London in 13 hours.

These figures show the degree to which the air-transport business has expanded in the last 10 years. The expansion is due to a number of factors.

In the first place, our airmen received invaluable experience during the war years in building planes and in establishing military airlines. Once the war ended, they were able to capitalize on their "know-how." Many men with military-airlines' experience went to work for civil airlines.

Too, the public had become more "air-minded" than ever before because of the experiences of the war years. Americans were receptive to the idea of air travel. Then, since our country had suffered no war damage, we were—unlike many other nations—able to swing quickly into a program of airline expansion. As a result, our na-

What are the facts about air crashes? How do plane accidents compare with accidents on other types of transportation?

Airline spokesmen say that plane crashes are not so frequent as the public is led to believe. The great amount of publicity given to plane disasters by newspapers and radio—they contend—makes people think that flying is more dangerous than the figures show it to be.

For example, they point out that, in both 1950 and 1951, the U. S. domestic and international scheduled airlines had but 1.3 passenger fatalities for every 100 million miles flown. The death rate for passengers in automobiles is not yet available for 1951, but for 1950 it was 2.2 per 100 million miles. Thus, say the airline people, it is safer to travel by a scheduled airline than to go for a trip in your own car.

Nonetheless, the aviation safety record is still below that of other common carriers—railroads and bus lines. Figures for 1950 show that the fatality rate of the airlines was about twice that of the railroads, and about six times that of busses. When the non-scheduled lines—where the fatality rate is higher than on scheduled lines—are figured in, the margin of the railroads and busses in safety is even more pronounced.

Airline officials agree that the air safety record must be improved, and a concerted effort is underway to make flying safer. Among the groups working together on this program are the civil airlines, the U. S. Air Force, and the two government agencies which play major roles in this field—the Civil Aeronautics Board and the Civil Aeronautics Administration.

PERSONNEL EMPLOYED BY DOMESTIC AIRLINES			
	1940	1945	1950
PILOTS AND COPILOTS	1,939	4,967	5,785
STEWARDS & STEWARDESSES	914	2,075	3,372
METEOROLOGIST & DISPATCHER	193	2,613	2,450
MECHANICS	4,054	10,844	15,788
OFFICE EMPLOYEES	5,855	19,241	21,894
ALL OTHERS	3,029	10,573	12,614
TOTALS	15,984	50,313	61,903

DRAWN FOR THE AMERICAN OBSERVER BY JOHNSON

A BIG GROWTH in the number of people who are employed by our nation's scheduled airlines has occurred since the beginning of World War II

volves the use of radio beams and radar is needed in some areas. The program is being pushed, but here, as in many other fields, the defense program has created shortages.

(2) Intensified pilot training. Since some accidents are caused by pilot errors, aeronautic officials are emphasizing training which will prepare pilots to cope with any unexpected situation which might confront them.

(3) Locating airports away from built-up areas. Some observers think that a long-range solution of the air-accident problem will have to include the placing of airports well away from residential areas. Thus, if a plane gets in trouble while arriving or leaving, it may be able to make a successful emergency landing in an open area.

Some aviation authorities foresee the day when airfields will be located away from big cities, and passengers will be shuttled between the cities and the nearest airports by helicopter. The successful use of helicopters in Korea has given a big boost to this type of plane which can land in a very small space and has a good safety record. Many aviation officials think that the helicopter will be used widely in civil aviation within a few years.

Schedule Problems

Another problem which the airlines face is that of reliability. Airlines are not nearly so reliable in keeping on schedule as are other forms of transportation. Bad weather may mean the postponement of a flight, or delay in arriving at one's destination. It may be that weather conditions will force the plane to land at another field many miles away.

The result is that many people who might otherwise travel by plane do not do so for fear that appointments cannot be kept. These uncertainties, it is said, cost airlines many millions of dollars a year in loss of cargo and passenger traffic.

Reliability is closely related to safety. If instruments and electronic aids can be improved further so that all-weather flying is possible, both reliability and safety problems will be solved to a large degree.

Still another problem which has troubled many airlines since the end of World War II has been that of "paying their own way." For a time many airlines had serious financial difficulties, but the picture has improved greatly in the last two or three years. Increased traffic has helped most of the airlines make a profit.

However, there is still one troublesome phase of the financial problem.

That concerns the payments made by the government to certain airlines for carrying the mail. The government has made these payments for many years, but part of the payments, it is admitted, are outright subsidies—that is, they are over and above the amount being paid for actual mail service. The government pays these sums in the belief that we must keep the airlines in existence as an aid to commerce and national defense.

End Subsidies

Some people say that the payment of subsidies should be ended. It is costing the taxpayer too much, they say, pointing out that some 34 million dollars went for this purpose last year. The continued payment of subsidies is permitting some airlines to use wasteful, costly methods of operation—they argue—since these airlines know they can count on receiving government aid.

Others, however, think that the subsidy system is necessary. If war should come, they say, we would badly need the skilled personnel which the airlines could furnish. The subsidies should be regarded, this group contends, as a necessary form of "defense insurance."

These are some of the major problems of the air transport lines. Of course, civil planes are being used for many purposes other than carrying passengers and freight. Two of the fastest growing parts of the aviation industry are agricultural and industrial aviation.

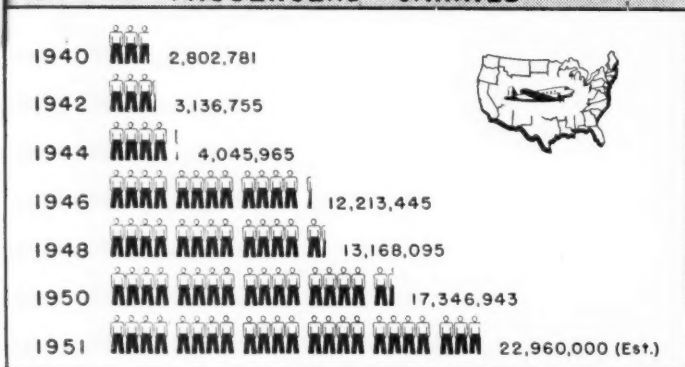
On many farms, for example, planes are being used to kill weeds in large fields through dropping chemicals. The chemicals will kill weeds but in most cases will not do any harm to crops. Last year in Illinois and Iowa, several hundred thousand acres of corn were treated by plane with chemical to control the corn borer. In the marshy rice fields of California, most of the seeding, fertilizing, and weeding is done by aircraft.

Aircraft have great advantages over other vehicles in applying sprays and dusts. The speed with which they can be called into action and the speed with which they can do the work make it certain that planes will be valuable farm tools from now on.

Air officials are also enthusiastic about the industrial uses of the plane. Already planes have proved their worth in such varied jobs as spotting schools of fish at sea for commercial fishermen, and patrolling pipe and power lines.

All in all, civil aviation seems to have a bright future, especially if the problems facing it can be solved.

DOMESTIC AIRLINE TRAFFIC PASSENGERS CARRIED



DRAWN FOR THE AMERICAN OBSERVER BY JOHNSON

THE PASSENGER transport business of scheduled airlines within the United States has grown very rapidly during recent years, as the above chart illustrates

tion got the jump on other countries in establishing new airlines and expanding old ones.

Today the airlines are major rivals of both the railroads and the bus lines. Both of these latter forms of transportation still carry many more passengers than the airlines, but the percentage of passengers carried by the airlines has been increasing. Airline people believe that it will continue to increase—if certain problems can be solved.

One of these problems is that of safety. Many people are opposed to traveling by air because they fear an accident like those which have happened recently.

These agencies point out that there seems to have been no single cause for the recent crashes. A variety of factors have been involved—engine failure, adverse weather conditions, and so forth. Consequently, there can be no "magic" cure-all for air accidents, but present safety steps must be continued and re-emphasized. Among the approaches that are now being made to air safety are the following:

(1) The use of improved instruments and safety equipment in planes and airports. Air authorities are now trying to modernize the airways and make it safe to fly in all kinds of weather. New equipment which in-

Four High School Students Speak for Democracy

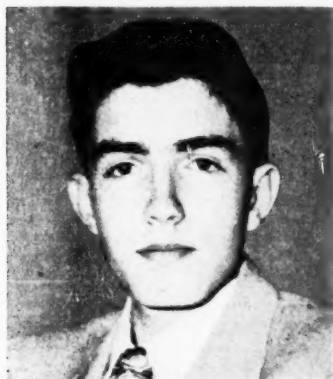
Winners in Nation-Wide Contest Voice Their Strong Faith in Freedom

(These are the winning scripts in the "I Speak for Democracy Contest." See note on page 4.)

THIS is the voice of tyranny, speaking for democracy. I feel that I can speak for democracy, for I have known it since my first existence . . . known it as an enemy. I have hated democracy, and I have fought it. I have been the aggressor. I have routed armies and enslaved nations. I have plundered homes, seized fortunes, and from millions, I have taken life. But I have failed. History will curse my name. . . .

Think, America, think of it! You live in a democracy. There is no absolute power packed into the hands of an individual. Yours is a government of the people, by the people, for the people. Yours is the finished product of Western Civilization. Your democracy has been founded on respect for the dignity of the human person. It means equal opportunity for all. It means the full enjoyment of every civil liberty—freedom of worship, of speech, of press, and of election. It means a government that is the servant of the people, not its master.

But you have taken too many things for granted. If only your family were suddenly transferred to a country ruled by me, tyranny, you would realize how essential these taken-for-granted rights are. You would find life a long nightmare of lingering fear; fear of the consequences of an



GEORGE A. FRILLOT, III
New Orleans, Louisiana

impulsive word or even a timid remark; fear that a forbidden book might be found in your possession; fear that something you had done which was lawful yesterday might be a crime tomorrow, and one for which you would be tried in a secret court, without jury, without witnesses, without hope of acquittal.

You have the Bill of Rights. It secures the free ground you tread, the free air you breathe. There is not an instant by day or night that these hard-won rights do not protect you and guard you in every move you make, every word you speak, every thought you think. Guard this wealth of freedom with the same spirit of courage that moved Washington and Franklin, Jefferson and Hamilton. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty. I know. I, tyranny, democracy's antagonist, her mortal enemy, her very contradiction—I know only too well. That is why—I speak for democracy.

By GEORGE A. FRILLOT, III.



THADDEUS ZOLKIEWICZ
Buffalo, New York

TONIGHT, ladies and gentlemen, the sound of shells and bombs seems far away. Tonight is the kind of night when one could lean back in his chair and completely relax; tonight is the kind of night when one could forget his troubles, and roam throughout the magic realms of the land of imagination and never want to return. For you see, tonight is a night for dreaming, and I can't help but wonder if it wasn't on a night like this, a night for dreaming, that the Dream of Democracy was first begun.

Democracy—it isn't a harsh word. It doesn't stand for oppression, or greed, or hate. No, it's a good word; it stands for good things.

Democracy—what does it stand for? The landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock, the bloody Revolution, the bloodier Civil War, a good many wars fought to keep it free and clean of the mire of oppression; heroes, champions of democracy, brave men, all of them shedding their blood, giving the last full measure of their devotion to a cause that deserved it; for democracy not only deserves to be loved, but in a sense demands to be loved and fought for, if need be, if it is to remain. . . .

Democracy—great statesmen, great achievements.

Democracy—the millions of little things that lie nestled close to our hearts—the rustle of wind through trees, the ripple of cool streams running beside virgin forests, baby's first steps, your son's first touchdown, your daughter's first date, small things, perhaps, but big to you, big in a democracy.

Democracy—the millions of poems and stories and songs of the land. . . .

Democracy—freedom of the press and of speech, freedom of religion. "From every mountainside, let freedom ring."

Yet, perhaps it was on a night like this, a night for dreaming, that the Dream of Democracy was begun. But one thing is certain, and that is that Democracy is a dream no longer. It's here, it's living, it's in the air we breathe, the thoughts we think, it beats within us with every throb of our hearts, it speaks when we speak, it's real, it's no dream, it's Democracy.

—By THADDEUS S. ZOLKIEWICZ.

HAVE you ever found a four-leaf clover? I never had the good fortune to find one in a clover patch, but I do have a different kind of four-leaf clover. It has many differ-



MARA GAY MASSELINK
Burlington, Iowa

ent names. But I call it democracy.

Four leaves—they symbolize our Four Freedoms—Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Religion, Freedom from Want, and Freedom from Fear. You won't find any of these in a country that doesn't have my kind of four-leaf clover. . . .

Freedom of Speech is the first leaf of my clover. It tells us that we don't have to watch every word we say—like the little boy who went to school in the totalitarian country. Every morning he'd say to his mother, "Don't worry, mommy. I won't say anything today in school that will hurt us."

The second leaf is our *Freedom of Religion*. We don't know what it's like to live in a country where there isn't any religion, where there aren't any churches to attend. Many people do, people who have had that leaf torn from their clover.

Freedom from Want? Yes, there are a lot of people who criticize and complain about our way of life. But when you get right down to it, there really isn't anything important that we lack.

And *Freedom from Fear*, the fourth and last leaf. It's the fourth leaf that makes the clover different from an ordinary one. Freedom from Fear makes a democracy different from a totalitarian country. Are you afraid that you might be awakened in the middle of the night tonight by the secret police and taken away from your family and home, never to return? Of course, you aren't. And, as long as you keep that fourth leaf on your clover, you won't have to be in constant fear.

This clover isn't indestructible. It can be killed. There are those who have been trying to kill it ever since democracy began. True, they've never succeeded, but today more than ever before we need to guard that four-leaf clover and keep others from trampling it—because Freedom is everything to us.

But more than that, we must believe in democracy, for, if we don't, we shall lose it. Our four-leaf clover will die and its leaves will wither, one by one.

So it's up to us to keep our Freedoms, to let our clover of democracy live as a green, growing sign to people everywhere. For, if our clover died, the place where it had been would be empty and barren, like our lives would be if we lost democracy.

—By MARA GAY MASSELINK.

EDITOR'S comment: In the first part of his essay, which is too long for us to publish in full, Dwight Clark tells of four great men of four periods in history who spoke for democracy.

One was Pericles, who ruled during the Golden Age of Athens, 450 years before the time of Christ. He was proud of his government which was "committed not to the few, but to the whole body of the people."

About 2,000 years later, Sir Thomas More, brilliant English author of the 16th century, described a perfect society based on democratic aims and ideals in his famous book, "Utopia."

Shortly after our democracy was established, Lazzare Nicholas Carnot, military genius of the French revolution, praised the American experiment.

Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, of our own day, has this to say:

"Democracy is based on the conviction that there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people."

From here on, we are quoting directly from Dwight's essay.

Four men, from four generations . . . leaders of their age. They spoke for democracy. But now, may I speak for democracy? For I'm a product of that experiment in living. . . .

Born in '34; average family. Father: business manager of a local newspaper; a newspaper that said what it honestly believed on the issues of the day. Mother: a former school-teacher, whose curriculum was not limited or dictated by our government. I joined a church; the church I wanted to join, out of 250 possible denominations. Our family moved West, without need of government passport or permission. My father became a small businessman, selling in competition with other men, just like him, in our community.

I'm 18 now, completing twelve years of free education, because the citizens of this nation believe that everyone must be able to understand the basic complexities of our modern world.

And in the future, I can continue my education. I can choose my life work. I can be mayor, governor, Congressman, or President. I can live in happiness and security. All this and more, makes me the luckiest person in the world today—because I live in a democracy.

Yes—Pericles, More, Carnot, Fosdick—and I. We speak for democracy!

—By DWIGHT CLARK, JR.



DWIGHT CLARK, JR.
Fort Collins, Colorado

Career for Tomorrow

Personnel Work

THE personnel worker's job is to serve as a link between the employer and other employees. Department stores, factories, government agencies (federal, state, and local), newspapers, almost any organization you can think of which has more than a few employees has what are known as personnel workers.

The workers, who are usually grouped together in a personnel department, have a variety of duties that are set in each case by the organization's needs. The department may classify the jobs throughout the business or agency as a basis for determining wages and salaries and to help in finding new employees. The department may also look for job applicants and hold preliminary interviews with the applicants, keep employee records, plan training programs, check to see that federal and state labor laws are being followed, and carry out other duties.

In large companies the different phases of the personnel work are handled by different groups of employees in the personnel department. In smaller concerns, one or two individuals handle the entire program.

Intelligence, an even disposition, administrative ability, an interest in people, and the ability to judge human nature are the qualities you should have if you want to go into personnel work.

Because the field is a relatively new

one, many people now in it have had little special training. They have gone into personnel work after holding other jobs in industry, business, education, law, or similar fields. Now, greater emphasis is put on college and graduate study; and if you are thinking of a career in this field, you should go to an accredited college and study such subjects as history, philosophy, economics, psychology, sociology, and probably statistics. Either in college or, preferably, at a graduate school, you should take courses in such subjects as public administration, business administration, occupation and job analysis, labor legislation, and production management.

Practical experience will be an important part of your background, too. No matter how much education you have, you will probably start your career by working for brief periods at different jobs outside the personnel department in the factory or business that employs you. You will also, in all probability, begin in a rather routine job when you start in the personnel department itself. Only when you have gained fairly wide experience will you be able to handle the intricate problems that will come before you.

Salaries in this field vary but, for experienced persons, they are generally good. A beginning job may pay only \$40 or \$50 a week. Advanced positions pay upwards from \$5,000 a



A PERSONNEL manager interviewing a job applicant

year. Responsible posts pay as much as \$15,000 or \$20,000 a year. Federal salaries range from \$3,100 to \$12,000 a year.

Personnel work is seldom routine; it demands the fullest use of a person's abilities; it offers good salaries and opportunities for advancement—these are among its advantages. Among the disadvantages of planning a career in the field are the rather extensive educational requirements and the fact that the field is becoming overcrowded.

Women as well as men find opportunities in personnel work, both in private firms and in government.

A leaflet entitled "Occupational Outlook Summary for Personnel Workers" (LS 49-1216) can be obtained free of charge from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Washington 25, D. C. An occupational brief entitled "Personnel Worker" (M101.28:35) can be obtained from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for 5 cents.—By CARRINGTON SHIELDS.

Study Guide

Civil Aviation

1. To what extent have the scheduled airlines of the United States grown since 1941?
2. Why did this expansion come about?
3. How do airline fatalities compare with those in other types of transportation?
4. What steps are being taken to make flying safer?
5. What is the "reliability" problem which the airlines face?
6. Give the pros and cons on the payment of federal subsidies to airlines?
7. How is civil aviation proving valuable in addition to carrying passengers and freight?

Discussion

1. Do you, or do you not, think that the federal government should help the airlines financially? Give reasons.
2. In your opinion, would it be a good or bad policy to prohibit airplanes from flying over cities?

The Commonwealth

1. Give an idea of the size of the British Commonwealth of Nations.
2. List the eight independent members of this group.
3. Why can it be said that the American Revolution had an influence on the development of a family of free Commonwealth countries?
4. Tell of the various ways in which non-independent Commonwealth territories are governed.
5. Explain how India differs from the other Commonwealth countries, in her relationship with the British Queen.
6. What are some of the other ties, besides the Queen and the Crown, that help to unite the Commonwealth?
7. Distinguish between the "British Empire" and the "Commonwealth."
8. Which two countries of the Commonwealth are engaged in a serious quarrel at the present time?

Discussion

1. Do you think that, if you lived in a Commonwealth country, you might favor withdrawing from the association as Ireland has done, or that you would prefer to stay in it? Give reasons for your answer.
2. On the basis of your present information, do you have the feeling that the Commonwealth will endure for many years to come, or do you think it may break up before too long a time? Explain your feeling on the subject.

Miscellaneous

1. Briefly describe three decisions made during the UN General Assembly's sixth annual session.
2. What strength was shown by the Communists in India's recent national elections?
3. How does our air power compare with that of Russia, according to Hanson Baldwin?
4. What changes does President Truman want Congress to make in the existing price-control law?
5. Why may it be said that New Zealand has reached an enviable position among the nations of the world?

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Historical Backgrounds - - Our Constitution

OUR Constitution went into effect as the highest law of the land 163 years ago, on March 4, 1789. Today, ours is the world's oldest *written* Constitution still in use by a democracy.

England has an older history, but no single, written document as the basis of her government. The English won democratic rights in a series of agreements made with ruling kings over a period of hundreds of years. All the various agreements *together* are the foundation of England's government.

Many lands, either because they gained their independence or wanted to try to improve their machinery of government, have adopted constitutions since ours came into existence. France, an older country than we are, for example, adopted a new constitution in 1946, just over 5 years ago. Canada's constitution is only 85 years old.

Although our country has faced many severe trials, we have managed to keep our highest law in force. We have made only 22 changes, or amendments, in the Constitution. Ten of those amendments, the Bill of Rights, were adopted during the first two years of our history under the Constitution.

Historians often look upon the Constitution, which has lasted so well, as the best ever adopted to guide a free government. William Gladstone, a famous British prime minister of the 19th century, has said that our guiding law is the greatest ever written by man in a given period of time.

What was the time needed? Less

than 4 months, in a Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia during the summer of 1787.

A total of 55 delegates from 12 of the 13 states attended the Philadelphia convention. Rhode Island did not send delegates, although she eventually approved the Constitution. About a dozen men did most of the work of drafting the new charter, and among them were George Washington, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and Benjamin Franklin.

The Declaration of Independence of 1776, written by Thomas Jefferson, laid down the principles of freedom for which we fought the Revolutionary War against England. The Continental Congress in 1777 drew up the Articles of Confederation, our first

constitution. It was written along lines suggested by Franklin.

Writers of the Constitution could draw upon these two and other older documents for ideas, but they had to evolve a new plan of government. The Confederation was unworkable. It was a weak alliance, because the states would not give up many of their powers.

So the delegates to Philadelphia in 1787 worked out the system we still have, with the President as head of the executive branch, Congress as the lawmaking branch, and the courts as the judicial branch.

As students of history know, a big dispute arose at the convention between small and large states over power in Congress. To please the larger states, the Constitution provided for the House of Representatives—in which states have delegates in proportion to their population. To please the smaller states, the fathers of the Constitution provided for the Senate—in which each state, regardless of size, has 2 Senators.

There was intense dispute over this and other controversial points, but the convention finally approved the Constitution in September, 1787. Nine states' approval was required to adopt the document, and that goal was reached on June 21, 1788.

The Congress of the Confederation then called elections for January, 1789 (in which Washington was chosen President), and summoned the new Congress to meet in New York City on March 4. On that day, the Confederation ended, and the United States of America began.



THE MAIN attraction at the Library of Congress in our nation's capital is the original copy of the United States Constitution.